



Tom Barrett
Mayor, City of Milwaukee

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Mayor Tom Barrett issued the following statement regarding the use of vacant MPS buildings:

“I’ve already called for the City to control the use of vacant MPS buildings. In fact, I introduced the measure in my 2011 City Legislative Package which was presented to and passed by the Common Council on November 23rd. When I met with Governor Walker in mid-December, we discussed empty MPS buildings and charter schools and we agreed these are areas we can work on together. I also laid the groundwork with legislative leaders during meetings that same day.

The City can manage the disposition of the buildings. It’s a real estate management and disposition approach. MPS will have ample time to determine the school system’s needs for any particular building.

The sale to either charter or choice interests will be permissive, not mandatory. The City may have an interest in a specific property for neighborhood development and/or redevelopment purposes.

Since 1989, the City has provided \$182 million to MPS in borrowing authority for school building improvements. Our City tax levy cost for this in 2011 alone is \$12.2 million. In an effort to balance our capital needs and priorities, I eliminated this program a few years back.

If the City gains control over building sales via legislation, I would advocate for sales proceeds to be used to help pay down the levy-supported debt we have incurred on MPS’ behalf.”